

**City of Bloomington
Telecommunications Council
Business Meeting – August 3rd, 2010**

**Common Council Chambers
City Hall at the Showers Building
401 N. Morton St.**

I. Members Present: Carl Zager, Eric Ost, Suzann Owen, Duane Busick

II. Approval of Minutes:

- Approval of July business meeting minutes, a motion was made by Suzann Owen to accept the minutes, and seconded by Duane Busick. All approved the motion. There was one correction on the first page at the bottom, the statement reads “Why does the report deal so much with only part of the Monroe Library”. “Only part of” needs to be taken out.

III. Public Comment and Reports –

Leeanna Jeffers

- Also attended last month meeting with an issue.
- She had contacted the IURC, and was informed that they had no control over that situation. It was up to the counties.
- She asked about the National Weather Service. The IURC gave her a contact number. The NWS was more helpful. She was informed that they had no control over the format presented over the television. They broadcast information, and then it is up to the TV/Sat/Cable companies to put it a format for viewers. They said it was Comcast who would be responsible for the total black screen.
- Comcast has not been contacted yet.
- Carl – Could you please repeat you were told by the IURC?
- Mrs. Jeffers – The first person that I spoke with, knew nothing about EAS announcements. After explaining that they were weather announcements, she seemed to have a little understanding. She didn’t think that they had anything to do with those, but transferred Mrs. Jeffers to the customer service department. They also reiterated that the IURC did not have anything to do with the EAS announcements, those announcements were controlled locally. She has talked to a customer representative at Comcast when she went to pay her bill. She was informed by them that it was out of their hands. She is going to try and get further up the ladder at Comcast.
- Suzann provided her with a phone number for an Executive Support Specialist in Fishers, Indiana. If the IURC passed on your complaint this office will have a record of it.

IV. Reports and Announcements

1. Telecommunication Council Members: No Reports

2. City ITS Department – Rick Dietz

- Announced the BDU Advisory meeting, August 5th in City Hall at 4pm.
- Technology Conference called Combine will be in Bloomington September 10-12th. You can find more information about the conference at thecombine@org.

Strategic Planning Project – Rick Dietz

- Carl – Do you have a feel for when we will be able to talk to you about our role in the strategic plan?
- Rick – Not at this time, but estimated dissemination in about a week.

3. CATS – Michael White

- Monthly programming
- City Council voted unanimously to support CATS with the franchise fees.
- Local producer, Lennon Beasley, has hit the 1,000 program mark.

Local Producer, Lennon Beasley

- Over a four year run has produced 1,000 programs.
- Programs include title like: Music Town, Rock around the Clock, Drum Show, Singing Studio, Romance Avenue, and Everything is Beautiful.
- He intends to do another 1,000 shows.

4. WTIU – Phil Meyer – No Report

V. Information from or about Video Service Provider

- Suzann- Major Change coming on September 21st from Comcast. A digital receiver or adaptor will be necessary to receive some channels that are currently available. Then on October 19th there will be another flight of channels that will need the receiver or adaptor. Equipment will be sent free of charge. Customers just have to call and request it. It would be better to do earlier than later.

VI. Old Business

1. Report to City Council – Still in process.

2. EAS Announcements

Carl – I would like to propose that the city contact Comcast and try to set up a discussion or review of required EAS alerts are handled. If that is outside our purview in terms of the relationship with VSP, we can understand that. But given the fact that the IURC doesn't have any authority over the issue and we don't have anything from Comcast that indicates they want to do anything but what they are doing. In terms, of emergency protection for the community we need to get some information.

3. PEG Channels-

Suzann – Michael has CATS been contacted by any VSP?

Michael – No

Suzann – Has there been any increased interest from local citizens on having those channels by those VSP?

Michael – There have been a couple of calls each week. People are astounded that the channels are not carried. We direct them to the IURC.

Suzann – Could a tally sheet be kept near the telephone for when these types of phone calls come in, and then report that each month?

Michael – Yes.

4. Telecommunications Council Charter – Rick Dietz

The council has requested guidance from the City's administration about its approach to the charter due to changes in the Indiana statute. We have been looking at a broad range of issues with Boards and Commissions, and it is our intent in the fall to move forward on some legislation that would make changes to a number of the commissions. We've looked closely at the municipal code language for the telecom council and state franchise law, and the changes that have been made. As we've looked at the language that empowers the telecom council and the state franchise law. We did not find a way to rectify the two. An element of the package that we are proposing to bring to the city council, with regards to Boards and Commissions will include the removal of the section that currently empowers the telecommunication council from the municipal code, thereby disbanding the telecom council. The mayor believes there are elements that are important. One of things we are contemplating is whether or not a community or county board, a more broad entity would be an appropriate vehicle for exploring some of these issues.

Vicki Renfrow - Council was given a current copy of the section that empowers the telecommunication council in the Bloomington Municipal Code.

The purpose of the council is to be responsible to the Board of Public Works in reviewing and evaluating the performance of the city's franchise agreements. In 2006, the state legislator added to the Indiana Code the establishing of the IURC as the soul franchising authority for service providers. Under Indiana Home Rule Law, the city can no longer exercise powers that have explicitly been given over to another entity.

Suzann – Will the cracks that are left be absorbed by another board like public works, because we still have the PEG issue?

Vicki – It would be whatever unit it is assigned too.

Suzann – Do citizen advisory groups exist where people can go to report things?

Vicki – I'm not familiar with all the Boards and Commission, just the ones I work with the most.

Feelings were also shared that the franchise fees need to be kept up with, and that they are still appropriated to the right places.

Carl – Given the amount of communication, confusion and frustration that was caused by the 2006 legislation, and lack of clear direction in terms of deleting the two parts of the city ordinance there were only two options: 1.) Revision of the charter or 2.) Disbanding. Disbanding and starting fresh, looking at the problems/issues with new views is a viable solution.

Suzann – Should we continue to schedule our meetings?

Rick – You are still commissioned as a council until the changes are made in the municipal code.

Eric - Is the BDU also going to be disbanded?

Rick – Things are under discussion for all Boards and Commissions.

Eric – I feel that this council's strength is that the public has the opportunity to come and share issues that arise. In other public meetings that isn't always the case. I just hope it is something not lost, because it is important to the citizens.

VII. New Business

VIII. Adjournment

Next Regular Meeting

September 7th, 2010

Common Council Chambers in City Hall at the Showers Building
401 N. Morton St.

Submitted by:

Stephanie Jachim 8-30-2010